

First record of Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* for Senegal

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Première mention du Vautour moine *Aegypius monachus* pour le Sénégal. Le 13 février 2007, un Vautour moine *Aegypius monachus* a été observé et photographié à Nianing, 10 km au sud de Mbour, Sénégal (14°20'N 16°57'W). L'oiseau était en train de se nourrir d'un cadavre d'âne en compagnie d'autres vautours. Ceci constitue la première donnée pour le Sénégal et la deuxième pour l'Afrique sub-saharienne, la première étant celle concernant un individu bague en Espagne en novembre 1994 et retrouvé mort dans la région de Sikasso, au Mali, le 19 janvier 1995.

On 13 February 2007, I noticed a group of vultures feeding on the carcasses of two donkeys near the main road at Nianing, c.10 km south of Mbour, Senegal (14°20'N 16°57'W). The group comprised 20 Rüppell's Griffon Vultures *Gyps rueppellii*, single African White-backed *G. africanus*, Eurasian Griffon *G. fulvus* and Lappet-faced Vultures *Torgos tracheliotus*, as well as three Hooded Vultures *Necrosyrtes monachus* and another, very large, vulture which was obvious for its uniformly blackish-brown plumage. The head was black. The bill was heavy, with a pale bluish-grey base and cere, and a large black tip; the feet were whitish-pink.

I immediately identified it as a Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus*, a species I had seen before in Spain. I observed it from the car at a distance of c.5–10 m and was able to acquire some photographs (Figs. 1–2). The blackish plumage and all-dark head are indicative of a young bird. Juvenile characters are retained for c.2 years after which the plumage becomes browner and the head paler (Forsman 1999). The bird was therefore probably a first-winter (second calendar-year).

Eurasian Black Vulture is a Palearctic and, very marginally, Indo-Malayan species (Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001). The nearest breeding population is in Spain where, due to conservation measures, the species has recovered from c.200 pairs in the 1970s to c.1,050–1,150 pairs by the end of the 20th century (BirdLife International 2000, 2004). Though largely sedentary, young birds do undertake dispersive movements. In north-west Africa, Eurasian Black Vulture is an accidental visitor to Morocco, mostly to the north; all birds are thought to be of Spanish origin (Thévenot *et al.* 2003). There are a few recent records in Algeria and one in Tunisia (Isenmann *et al.* 2005,

Isenmann & Moali 2000). The species is not mentioned for Senegambia (Barlow *et al.* 1997) or for West Africa (Borrow & Demey 2001, 2004), but there is a recent recovery in Mali of a bird ringed in Spain in November 1994 and found dead, presumably shot, on 18 January 1995 at Sola Bougouda, Sikasso (11°18'N 05°38'W: Cantos & Gómez-Manzanque 1996). This appears to constitute the first documented sub-Saharan record, as an old claim from Sudan probably referred to Lappet-faced Vulture (Nikolaus 1987).

The record reported here is thus the first of Eurasian Black Vulture for Senegal and the second for sub-Saharan Africa. It seems probable that the bird joined Eurasian Griffon Vultures which, following their dramatic increase in Spain in the last 15 years, have become regular winter visitors to Senegambia (Barlow *et al.* 1997).

Acknowledgements

I thank Ron Demey for assisting me in writing this note, Ricard Gutiérrez for providing details of the Mali record, and Nik Borrow and Dick Forsman for their comments on a draft.

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Figures 1–2. Eurasian Black Vulture *Aegypius monachus* with Rüppell's Griffon *Gyps rueppelli*, Eurasian Griffon *G. fulvus*, African White-headed *G. africanus*, Lappet-faced *Torgos tracheliotus* and Hooded Vultures *Necrosyrtes monachus*, Nianing, Senegal, 13 February 2007 (Adriano Talamelli)

Vautour moine *Aegypius monachus* en compagnie de cinq autres espèces de vautours (Vautour de Rüppell *Gyps rueppelli*, Vautour fauve *G. fulvus*, Vautour africain *G. africanus*, Vautour oricou *Torgos tracheliotus* et Vautour charognard *Necrosyrtes monachus*), Nianing, Sénégal, 13 février 2007 (Adriano Talamelli)

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Received 23 March 2007; revision accepted 20 April 2007.